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General Assembly

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ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS
OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 171st MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 25 October 1990, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mrs. DIALLO (Senegal)

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Programme of work for 1991

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Any corrections to the record of this meeting and of other meetings will be issued in a corrigendum.

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1. The agenda was adopted.

REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN ON REGIONAL SEMINARS AND NGO SYMPOSIA AND MEETINGS ORGANIZED BY THE COMMITTEE AND OTHER RECENT ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

2. The CHAIRMAN said that, as part of its very full programme of work since its previous meeting, in May 1990, the Committee had organized a regional seminar in Europe, a seminar and a symposium for non-governmental organizations in North America, a European NGO symposium and an international NGO meeting.

3. At the European Regional Seminar, held at Stockholm from 7 to 11 May 1990, it had been particularly encouraging to note that the participants in the panels had included parliamentarians and other politicians from various European countries, Israel and the occupied territory, in addition to representatives of the Palestinian diaspora. Contributions had been of a high standard, and had led to lively and specific discussions which had testified to a spirit of co-operation and a general concern to avoid extremist positions and to arrive at practical proposals. She thanked the Government of Sweden for its hospitality, which had greatly contributed to the success of the Seminar. The Seminar had enjoyed wide coverage in the Swedish media, and the proceedings, including the text of the conclusions and recommendations adopted, had been issued as a publication of the Division for Palestinian Rights.

4. The seventh North American Regional Seminar had been held at United Nations Headquarters on 25 and 26 June, with the participation of 46 Member States in addition to observers from non-member States, United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations and national liberation movements. Its report, which contained summaries of the statements made and the conclusions and recommendations adopted, had already been published by the Division for Palestinian Rights.

5. Representatives of a large number of United States and Canadian non-governmental organizations, as well as representatives of several Jewish organizations, had taken part in the North American Regional NGO Symposium, held at United Nations Headquarters from 27 to 29 June 1990. Experts from Israel, the occupied territory and the United States had presented papers and participated in the two panels. In addition, 12 workshops had been organized to discuss the specific activities to be undertaken by NGOs in the coming year. The Declaration adopted at the Symposium had been published in the June 1990 issue of the monthly bulletin of the Division for Palestinian Rights, and the report would be issued as a publication of the Division.

(The Chairman)

6. The European Regional NGO Symposium had been held at Geneva on 27 and 28 August 1990, followed by the International NGO Meeting, which had taken place from 29 to 31 August 1990. Experts from Israel, the occupied territory and a number of European countries had presented papers, but it was to be regretted that several prominent Palestinians had been prevented by the Israeli authorities from participating in the two meetings. The delegation from the Committee had protested strongly against the arbitrary decisions of the Israeli authorities. Under the main theme "Palestine and Israel: Prerequisites for Peace", three panels had been established, in addition to six action-oriented workshops. The declarations adopted at the Symposium and the meeting had been published by the Division for Palestinian Rights in the August 1990 issue of its monthly bulletin, and the report would appear shortly as a publication of the Division.

7. In conclusion, she informed the Committee that, since its previous meeting, it had been represented in the following intergovernmental meetings: (a) the Regional Seminar for the Caribbean Area, held in Barbados from 19 to 21 June 1990 in observance of the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples; (b) at the fifty-second Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers and the twenty-sixth Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, held respectively from 3 to 7 and 9 to 11 July 1990 at Addis Ababa; (c) at the Nineteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held at Cairo from 31 July to 4 August 1990; and (d) at the Third Conference of Ministers of Information of the Non-Aligned Movement, held at Havana from 24 to 27 September 1990.

8. She said that, if no delegation wished to comment, she would assume that the Committee wished to take note of the conclusions and recommendations of the European and North American regional seminars and the declarations adopted at the North American and European Regional NGO Symposia and the International NGO Meeting. The documents would be annexed to the Committee's report in accordance with established practice.

9. It was so decided.

STANDARD OF ACCOMMODATION FOR OFFICIAL TRAVEL OF MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE (ST/SGB/107/Rev.5)

10. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that the Division of Palestinian Rights had been notified by the Office of the Controller that the Chairman and the members of the Committee were entitled to economy-class travel, irrespective of the length of travel time. The Division had also been advised that the daily subsistence allowance paid for such travel remained unchanged, and that it was equivalent to the daily subsistence allowance paid to Secretariat officials, plus 40 per cent.

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11. Mr. ALDRED (Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Finance), speaking on behalf of the Controller, said that he wished to clarify a number of points raised concerning the Committee's travel entitlements.

12. It was clear from General Assembly resolution 3376 (XXX) that the Committee was composed of representatives of Member States and that the Assembly did not make any exceptional arrangements for travel by Committee members. When the Committee held its authorized meetings in New York, its members were not entitled to either travel expenses or subsistence allowances.

13. Resources were provided under sections 1A and 1B of the programme budget, however, to cover Committee members' travel and subsistence costs when they attended conferences, seminars and other meetings that the Committee considered appropriate.

14. The current rules governing the payment of travel expenses and subsistence allowances in respect of members of organs or subsidiary organs of the United Nations were defined in document ST/SGB/107/Rev.5. That revision had been issued on 18 July 1989, and any conflicting arrangements that might have been in effect prior to that time had been thereby superseded.

15. It should be noted that there was no specific reference to the Committee in document ST/SGB/107/Rev.5. Nevertheless, under paragraph 6 (a) of that document, it was clear that the payment of travel expenses by the United Nations was limited to the cost of economy-class accommodation, with only three exceptions. The first exception applied to one representative of each Member State designated as a least developed country attending sessions of the General Assembly; the second applied to all members of organs or subsidiary organs who served in their individual capacity, as distinct from those serving as representatives of Governments. The third applied to individuals appointed by organs or subsidiary organs to undertake in their personal capacity special studies or other ad hoc tasks on behalf of the bodies involved.

16. According to paragraph 1.104 of the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 (A/44/6/Rev.1), the five members of the Committee who were expected to travel to regional seminars, symposia and meetings during the biennium did so in their official capacity. That reference to official capacity was understood to mean that such travel was undertaken by Committee members as representatives of Governments, not in a personal capacity, and should therefore be by economy class.

17. Moreover, economy class did not necessarily mean that a full economy-fare ticket would be provided. General Assembly resolution 32/198 stipulated that travel expenses should be limited to the least costly air-fare structure. Consequently, the United Nations would purchase the cheapest ticket available in economy class for the date on which the travel was to be undertaken.

18. Mr. INSANALLY (Guyana) welcomed the Secretariat's clarification, but said that he had yet to be reassured that the rules did not discriminate against the members of the Committee. He also felt that Governments should be notified well in advance if they were expected to subsidize Committee members traveling in an official capacity on the Committee's behalf. He did not wish to complain, and understood that resources available for official travel were scarce, but wondered whether the efficiency of the Committee's representation might not be impaired by the insistence on economy-class travel, with its attendant discomfort and fatigue.

19. Mr. ALDRED (Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Finance) said that there was no intention to discriminate against the Committee, but that the rules laid down by the General Assembly established that official travel on behalf of any Committee for which other financial arrangements had not been specifically made would be in economy class. He sympathized, however, with the plight of Committee members subjected to the rigours of economy-class travel and suggested that, if the Committee felt strongly on the matter, it might include in its report a request to the General Assembly to clarify the issue.

20. Mr. BORG OLIVIER (Malta), Rapporteur, said that, when attending meetings held away from Headquarters, members of the Committee were acting on the Committee's behalf and not in their capacity aa representatives of their Government. He therefore hoped that the rules would not be too restrictively interpreted, and agreed with the representative of the Secretariat that the Committee should take the matter up in its report to the General Assembly.

21. Mr. SY (Senegal) said he endorsed the comments made by the representative of Malta. A less restrictive interpretation should be made of what constituted economy-class fare. The limitations which the cheapest fares imposed greatly hampered the work of Committee members.

22. Mr. AL-KIDWA (Observer for Palestine) said he realized that the Secretariat had had no intention of discriminating against the Committee; however, another entity had tried to interpret the rules differently, and that was why the Committee was now faced with the problem. That was an unacceptable situation. Political factors had been brought in which only highlighted the importance of the Committee's work. Members who held the rank of ambassador could not accept the restrictive routing by economy class, which hampered them in the exercise of their other duties. It was amazing that the regulation about air fares should have suddenly been discovered after the Committee had already been working for so many years.

23. It should be noted that when the Chairman had represented the Committee at the Security Council meeting in Geneva, she had done so in her capacity as Chairman and not as representative of Senegal. It was unacceptable that she should have to travel in a back seat, in economy class, while other representatives travelling in the same capacity, as well as Secretariat officials, were seated in business class or even in first class. A matter of principle was involved. He endorsed the comments made by the representative of Malta in that regard. One solution might be to reduce allocations to missions in the budget and to use the savings to finance other tasks of the Committee.

24. Mr. DROUSHIOTIS (Cyprus) said he endorsed the comments made by the representatives of Guyana, Malta and Senegal and the Observer for Palestine. He appreciated the explanation offered by the representative of the Secretariat, but felt that the issue should be re-examined in the light of the comments made by the representative of Malta.

25. Mr. ROSHAN-RAWAAN (Afghanistan), endorsing the remarks made by the representative of Malta, said that when the Committee met in New York, its members acted as representatives of their Governments. However, when they travelled outside New York on behalf of the Committee the situation was different. They were representing the Committee itself.

26. Mr. GUPTA (India) said he endorsed the comments made by the representative of Malta. When the Committee appointed a delegation to represent it at a seminar or a meeting, its members were representing not their Governments, but the Committee.

27. Mr. ALDRED (Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Finance) pointed out that document ST/SGB/107/Rev.5 stated, in paragraph 3 (c) (ii), that travel and subsistence expenses should be paid in respect of the following persons regardless of whether they served in their individual personal capacity or as representatives of Governments: one member of an organ or subsidiary organ serving as its designated representative at meetings of a second organ or subsidiary organ. That person would travel by business class. However, paragraph 1.104 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 (A/44/6/Rev.1) stated that it was anticipated that five members of the Committee would travel in their official capacity, which meant that they would not travel in their personal capacity. There was a subtle difference, and he would like to hear what the General Assembly had to say on the matter. The General Assembly had never pronounced itself on the travel standards for the Committee.

28. With regard to the possibility of paying the full economy-class fare, his Office had written to the Under-Secretary-General for General Services, and had been told that all tickets were provided at the least costly rate. In its resolution 37/241, the General Assembly had concurred with the recommendation of the Joint Inspection Unit that the Secretary-General should undertake negotiations with air carriers to obtain discounts or to relax conditions which were an obstacle to obtaining the most economical fares. It had also reaffirmed its resolution 32/198, which provided that travel expenses should be limited to the least costly air-fare structure. On a given routing, economy fares might vary depending on the destination, season and even the day of the week, hence, some would be charged at full rate and some would not.

29. Several members had mentioned that there seemed to be some kind of discrimination against the Committee; none had been intended in the Secretariat's ruling, which had been given in response to a request. If there was discrimination, perhaps it had originated in the General Assembly when it had decided that some members should travel in one way and some in another. With regard to the question of the level of representation, the Secretariat had to apply equal standards to all members of the same committee or body unless the General

(Mr. Aldred)

Assembly decided otherwise. Only the General Assembly could decide whether an ambassador should travel by business or first class and other members of the delegation by a lower standard. Although his Office had already done exhaustive research on the question, it would review the situation again. If it found any way in which it could arrive at a different interpretation, it would do so; however, he could make no promises.

30. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Officers of the Committee should keep the matter in mind and discuss with the Secretariat the possibilities of finding a more adequate solution. If she heard no objection, she would take it that the Committee agreed.

31. It was so decided.

DRAFT REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS FORTY-FIFTH SESSION (A/AC.183/1990/CRP.2/Rev.1 and Add.1)

32. Mr. BORG OLIVIER (Malta), Rapporteur, introducing the draft report of the Committee to the General Assembly (A/AC.183/1990/CRP.2/Rev.1 and Add.1), said that the main document had been the object of thorough consideration by the Working Group at two meetings held on 11 September and 3 October 1990. The addendum updated some sections of the main document. In accordance with established practice, the annexes, listed in the table of contents, would consist of the original recommendations of the Committee and the recommendations and declarations adopted by participants in regional seminars and non-governmental organization meetings and symposia, preceded by a brief factual introduction. Since those documents were already known to the Committee, they had not been circulated again.

33. Briefly summarizing the contents of the report, he pointed out that the main body of the report was in chapter IV, which gave an account of the action taken by the Committee and the Division for Palestinian Rights in implementation of their respective mandates. Drawing attention to the addendum, he said that, in view of the unanimous adoption by the Security Council, on 24 October, of resolution 673 (1990), he proposed that paragraph 46 in the addendum should be replaced by the following text:

> "On 24 October 1990, the Council adopted unanimously resolution 673 (1990), by which it deplored the refusal of the Israeli Government to receive the mission of the Secretary-General to the region; it urged the Israeli Government to reconsider its decision and insisted that it comply fully with resolution 672 (1990) and to permit the mission of the Secretary-General to proceed in keeping with its purpose; it requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Council the report requested in resolution 672 (1990); and affirmed its determination to give full and expeditious consideration to the report."

(Mr. Borg Olivier, Malta)

34. With regard to chapter VI, containing the recommendations of the Committee, he said that those recommendations had been drafted taking into account developments since the previous session of the General Assembly. The situation had been changing from day to day, and it might be necessary to reconsider and update some of the formulations contained in the report. He trusted that the report could be adopted by the Committee at the current meeting for submission to the General Assembly as soon as possible.

35. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should consider the draft report chapter by chapter.

36. It was so decided.

37. Chapters I, II and III were adopted.

Chapter IV

38. Mr. SY (Senegal), referring to the sentence that was to be inserted at the end of paragraph 22 (A/AC.183/1990/CRP.2/Rev.1/Add.1, para. 1), said that it would be preferable not to be so specific when referring to the number of Palestinians killed. It might thus be preferable to refer to "the death of more than 20 Palestinians".

39. The CHAIRMAN said that Senegal's remark would be taken into account.

40. Chapter IV, as orally amended, was adopted.

41. Chapter V was adopted.

Chapter VI

42. Mr. AL-KIDWA (Observer for Palestine) said that the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories prompted his delegation to focus more closely on the protection of the Palestinian population, in accordance with the Fourth Geneva Convention. Accordingly, it wished to appeal to Committee members for support regarding the establishment of an observer group under the auspices of the United Nations that would operate in the occupied territories in general and in Jerusalem in particular. Furthermore, with regard to the question of the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, his delegation noted that the language used in the report differed from that used in General Assembly resolution 44/42. His delegation had a preference for the language used in that resolution. He wished to suggest that the Committee should request the Rapporteur, under the Chairman's guidance, to take account of those comments when drawing up the definitive version of the report.

43. Mr. BORG OLIVIER (Malta), Rapporteur, said that he took note of the legitimate request made by the Observer for Palestine. He would be happy to undertake the proposed task, under the Chairman's guidance.

44. The CHAIRMAN said that the necessary action would be taken without delay.

45. Chapter VI, as orally amended, was adopted.

46. The draft report, as amended, was adopted.

PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 1991

47. The CHAIRMAN said that the Spanish Government had informed the Committee that it was willing to host a regional seminar on the question of Palestine in May 1991, in Madrid. If she heard no objection, she would take it that the Committee wished to accept the Spanish Government's generous offer.

48. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.

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8 November 1990

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COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS
OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 172nd MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 5 November 1990, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mrs. DIALLO (Senegal)

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Adoption of the agenda

Report submitted to the Security Council by the Secretary-General in accordance with resolution 672 (1990)

First report of the Credentials Committee

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1. The agenda was adopted.

REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESOLUTION 672 (1990) (S/21919)

2. Mr. AL-KIDWA (Observer for Palestine) said that the current meeting's agenda was of special importance because of the dangerous situation prevailing in the Israeli-occupied territories. There had been a significant escalation of Israeli repression and terrorism against the Palestinian people, which might lead to a tremendous conflagration at any time. In a letter submitted to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council, his delegation had said that Israeli security forces were waging a systematic campaign to repress and terrorize the civilian population in the Gaza Strip, and that the campaign reflected a political decision by the Israeli Government. The violence had resulted in over 700 casualties, including persons of all ages, within a single 48-hour period, and over 200 of those casualties had been caused by the live ammunition used by Israeli forces. That tragedy had been preceded by the Israeli massacre of Palestinians at Al-Haram Al-Shareef, and by countless illegal Israeli practices that violated pertinent General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, as well as the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

3. In recent weeks, the Security Council had adopted resolution 672 (1990), and had subsequently adopted resolution 673 (1990) in response to Israel's refusal to receive the Secretary-General's fact-finding mission in compliance with resolution 672 (1990). Because the Israeli Government had not only failed to comply with the resolution, but had formally rejected it, Israel was in the distinctive position of having violated both the United Nations Charter and the conditions of its admission to membership of the Organization.

4. He appreciated the report submitted by the Secretary-General, pursuant to Security Council resolution 672 (1990), on the practical steps that could be taken to ensure the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilians living under Israeli occupation. The report would provide a useful basis for the Security Council's consideration of the situation in the occupied territories, and would represent an important step in the efforts of the Security Council and of the United Nations as a whole to restore the rights of the Palestinian people.

5. He asked the Committee to support the draft resolution to be submitted to the Security Council. It had previously been stated before the Security Council and other bodies that whatever resolution was adopted should call for the deployment of a United Nations observer force in the occupied territories, including Jerusalem. That measure alone would be a very practical means of providing a minimum level of protection to preserve the lives and the integrity of the Palestinian people. It

(Mr. Al-Kidwa, Observer, Palestine)

would also be a step towards tackling the larger question of the root political causes of the situation, the objective being to develop a comprehensive and lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. However, the immediate need was for the Security Council to focus its attention on the protection of Palestinian civilians. He was confident that the Committee would demonstrate its political support of his delegation's position.

6. The CHAIRMAN said that if she heard no objection, she would take it that the Committee decided to take note of the statement made by the Observer for Palestine.

7. It was so decided.

FIRST REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE (A/45/674)

8. Mr. AL-KIDWA (Observer for Palestine) said that many members of the Committee had joined the members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in considering the credentials of the Israeli delegation and their reservations about those credentials. In addition, the Arab Group of the Whole had considered a draft amendment to the General Assembly resolution on the report of the Credentials Committee. The amendment would make an exception to the approval of credentials in the case of Israel, and would take the position that the General Assembly had previously taken on South Africa.

9. Because of the new balance of power in the world and the new political climate in the United Nations, his delegation had taken the initiative of replacing the usual amendment with another amendment, which he hoped would be acceptable to all Member States. The objective of the new amendment was to state clearly that the General Assembly's acceptance of the Israeli delegation's credentials was in no way an indication that it accepted Israel's position, which contravened both Security Council resolutions and the United Nations Charter. It was necessary for the General Assembly to make a distinction between its position on Israel's credentials and its position on those of all other countries, because Israel's position was unique: it had rejected all Security Council resolutions concerning the situation in the occupied territories, it had violated the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and worst of all, it had proclaimed its position in an official manner that blatantly violated article 25 of the United Nations Charter.

10. Although the new initiative took into account the recent international developments which had created new possibilities for the settlement of the question of Palestine, it maintained the basic position that the General Assembly was obligated to adopt on political, legal and moral grounds. The members of the Arab Group of the Whole had agreed unanimously on the objectives of the amendment, but were open to suggestions from other groups on the exact wording, and hoped that their flexibility would enable them to win a majority of votes in the General Assembly. He hoped that the members of the Committee would show their solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people by supporting the new initiative.

11. The CHAIRMAN said that if she heard no objection, she would take it that the Committee decided to take note of the statement made by the Observer for Palestine.

12. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.

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4 December 1990

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COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS
OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 173rd MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 28 November 1990, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. ALARCON DE QUESADA (Cuba)

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Adoption of the agenda

Draft resolutions on the question of Palestine

Other matters

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1. The agenda was adopted.

DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

2. The CHAIRMAN introduced three draft resolutions on the question of Palestine that would be submitted to the General Assembly once they were approved by the Committee. The draft resolutions, identified by the letters A, B and C, had been drafted during consultations between the Bureau of the Committee and the Secretariat. The draft resolutions referred to the work of the Committee, of the Division for Palestinian Rights and of the Department of Public Information, respectively. Their purpose was to allow for a continuation of the programme of work envisaged in the programme budget for 1990-1991, approved by the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session. The three draft resolutions closely followed the wording of parts A, B and C of General Assembly resolution 44/41, to which minor changes had been made in order to bring them up to date. In addition, paragraph 4 of draft resolution A included a reference to the need to mobilize public opinion in Europe and North America.

3. In paragraph 2 (b) of draft resolution C, a specific reference to the "Palestinian people" had been added in order to bring the text in line with the wording of other resolutions. In paragraph 2 (c), the wording had been changed in order to give the Department of Public Information greater flexibility in the allocation of resources. In paragraph 2 (d), the words "and promote" had been added after the words "to organize", in order to open up new possibilities for journalists, and the words "including to the occupied territories" had also been added.

4. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to approve draft resolutions A, B and C.

5. It was so decided.

6. Mr. BORG-OLIVIER (Malta), Rapporteur, suggested that the statement on the financial implications of draft resolution A should include a paragraph to the effect that, with reference to standards of travel and related arrangements, the Committee had stressed that members of the Committee serving on delegations to conferences, meetings and seminars organized by the Committee were to be accorded the status of officials on special assignment for the Committee to promote the aims and objectives of the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly.

7. The CHAIRMAN said that the Secretary would take note of the suggestion made by the Rapporteur.

8. The CHAIRMAN invited the Observer for Palestine to introduce two other draft resolutions, one concerning the uprising (intifadah) of the Palestinian people, and the other concerning the International Peace Conference on the Middle East.

9. Mr. MANSOUR (Observer for Palestine), introducing the draft resolutions, recalled that prior to the forty-fourth session, the resolution on the intifadah had been dealt with in connection with the item on Israeli practices in the occupied territories. At the forty-fourth session, however, it had been considered under the item on the question of Palestine; that would also be the case at the present session. The draft resolution on the intifadah was similar to General Assembly resolution 44/2, with the following minor changes to bring the text up to date: in the fourth preambular paragraph, reference was made to the recent Israeli violence which had taken place on 8 October 1990 at the Al-Haram Al-Shareef in Jerusalem, and in the seventh preambular paragraph, the reference to the report of the Secretary-General had been changed to the plural, since there was now more than one report. The rest of the draft resolution remained the same as the one adopted at the forty-fourth session.

10. The draft resolution on the International Peace Conference on the Middle East was also similar to the one adopted at the forty-fourth session, namely General Assembly resolution 44/42, with the following changes: in the first preambular paragraph, the date had been changed to 12 November 1990, and in the second preambular paragraph, the year had been changed to 1990. In that regard, however, he wished to mention that there was some question about the date on which the chairman of the observer delegation of Palestine would be able to address the General Assembly, inasmuch as the Government of the United States of America had not yet granted him a visa. The reference to his statement could accordingly not be finalized until the exact date was known.

11. He hoped that the General Assembly would adopt the two draft resolutions by an overwhelming majority, as had been the case at the forty-fourth session.

12. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to approve the two draft resolutions introduced by the Observer for Palestine.

13. It was so decided.

14. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the draft resolutions which had just been approved by the Committee would be submitted to the General Assembly. He invited all members of the Committee to become sponsors of the draft resolutions; delegations wishing to do so should contact the Secretariat.

OTHER MATTERS

15. Mr. MANSOUR (Observer for Palestine) said he wished to inform the Committee of the problems that had been encountered by the delegation of Palestine in connection with its plans to participate in the work of the General Assembly. The Palestine delegation, composed of three members and headed by Mr. Farouk Kaddoumi, had not been able to obtain entry visas, even though the request to the United States Government had been made, following the normal procedures, on 29 October. The issue had been raised with the Secretary-General and the Legal Counsel, without any positive results or even a clarification as to the reasons for the denial of the

(Mr. Mansour, Observer, Palestine)

visas. Such action on the part of the Government of the host country was clearly an obstruction of the work of the General Assembly, and would make it impossible for the Palestine delegation to participate in the activities scheduled for the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on 29 November, which was only one day away.

16. In the view of his delegation, action by the General Assembly was required. The Arab Group was meeting at that moment, with a view to submitting to the General Assembly a draft resolution protesting the hostile action by the United States Government, which prevented the Palestine delegation from exercising its rights under the Headquarters Agreement, and proposing a change in the date for initiation of the debate on the question of Palestine, in order to allow time for the Palestine delegation to obtain the visas and arrive at Headquarters.

17. Recalling the situation which had arisen during the forty-third session, when Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, had been refused a visa, he said he hoped that not only the Committee but all member States would express their support for the Palestine delegation as they had done at that time. His delegation was sending a letter to the Secretary-General, the text of which would be circulated later in the day, protesting the hostile action of the host country Government against the Palestinian people and leadership and its obstruction of the work of the General Assembly.

18. With regard to the other activities scheduled for the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, his delegation hoped that they would take place as scheduled.

19. Turning to the question of the situation in the occupied territories, especially after the recent massacre in Jerusalem, he said that a draft resolution had been before the Security Council for more than a week, but it had not yet been put to a vote. He believed that the Security Council had waited too long, and that it should vote on the draft resolution immediately. The President of the Council should not continue to ignore the request of the sponsors and of the Palestine delegation for an immediate vote on the draft resolution.

20. He also wished to inform members that discussions concerning the draft resolution on the report of the Credentials Committee had been concluded, and that the Arab Group planned to introduce an amendment which would consist of the addition of the words "on the understanding that the credentials of the delegation of Israel do not relate to or cover the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, namely Jerusalem, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Syrian Arab Golan", after the words "Approves the report of the Credentials Committee". The Arab Group had met with the regional groups during the past week, and would be meeting later in the day with the Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement to seek support for that amendment, which would be submitted after the General Assembly had completed its debate on the question of Palestine. He hoped that all members of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the

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Palestinian People would support the amendment, which represented a positive development in the strategy for dealing with the question of Palestine.

21. Mr. JAIN (India) said it would be very helpful if the draft resolution being prepared by the Arab Group could be circulated as soon as possible, in order to allow time for delegations to transmit it to their Governments for instructions. His delegation had supported General Assembly resolution 43/48, on the report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country, which had dealt with the failure by the host country to approve the granting of the entry visa requested for Mr. Arafat.

22. Mr. MANSOUR (Observer for Palestine), responding to the suggestion made by the representative of India, explained that the Arab Group was meeting at that moment, and that once they had agreed on a text, it would be circulated to all delegations. He hoped that it would be available by noon or early afternoon.

23. Mr. BORG-OLIVIER (Malta) suggested that the Committee should appeal to the Secretary-General to exercise his good offices with the authorities of the host country in order to ensure that the representatives of Palestine would be able to participate in the work of the General Assembly.

24. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to the proposal made by the representative of Malta, in which case he, as Acting Chairman of the Committee, would address a letter to the Secretary-General requesting him to exercise his good offices with the authorities of the host country.

25. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.